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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

18 Nov - 63

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Acquisition of Additional U-2 Aircraft
From the Department of Defense

1. This memorandum is for your information.

2. I have looked into the question of possibly acquiring additional U-2 aircraft from Department of Defense resources with the Office of Special Activities in connection with our current request to return the two U-2s on loan to SAC to our inventory. My basic conclusion is that these two matters should be isolated from each other lest the deliberative aspects of acquiring additional U-2s from DOD be detrimental to our more immediate problem of obtaining release of the loaned aircraft to the Edwards Air Force Base Detachment.

3. ☐ leaves us with a total of eight airplanes, and while not all of these are immediately available in an operational configuration, I think we can weather the next four to six months without being seriously hampered. The present disposition of the eight U-2s is as follows:

a. One aircraft is continually occupied as a test bed for product improvement in the IDEALIST program and also for sub-system tests for project OXCART. The aircraft is stationed at Burbank under Lockheed control.

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c. At this moment, this is only one aircraft available to the Edwards Detachment; however, assuming a favorable decision to return the two loaned aircraft from SAC within the next few days, the Edwards unit will then have three U-2s in inventory.

d. Two aircraft are in the conversion process at Burbank where they are being modified for carrier operations. The first of these will be available at the end of January 1964, and the second sometime in February of that year. On being assigned to Edwards, this will bring their strength up to five aircraft.

4. One limiting factor in contemplating additional conversions is the number of engines available to support the J-75 version of the U-2. At present there are thirteen engines in inventory for the eight aircraft. Two additional engines repossessed from the OXCART program are being converted by Pratt & Whitney in Hartford to the J-75-P-13 series needed for the U-2 installation. These engines will be serviceable around the first of April 1964 at which time we will have fifteen engines for eight aircraft which is very close to being the optimum figure. A ninth aircraft would mean reducing the proportionate number of spares, and such action should probably also be accompanied by another engine conversion each of which cost [REDACTED]

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5. No current fiscal year funds have been programmed in the IDEALIST budget to take care of converting another U-2. Each such conversion costs [REDACTED] not including the engine which is a direct cost to USAF. We would have to obtain the necessary funds from D/NRO which would probably be an exhaustive process. Our personnel assets at Edwards are

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now adequate to support a dual staging capability [redacted]

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[redacted] If the decision is made to add a ninth aircraft later in 1964, no additional personnel will be required in the Edwards Detachment to support it.

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6. One thing working in our favor as far as aircraft utilization is concerned is that we are able, because of added experience in operating with the J-75 engine, to extend the time between overhauls up to 800 hours as opposed to 400 hours earlier in the game. Engine IRANS remain at 1000 hours but hot section inspections of these engines have climbed from 200-hour intervals to 400-hour intervals. The net effect of this is that we are able to program more effective aircraft utilization in 1963 than we were in 1958 when the J-75 program commenced.

7. SUMMARY: I believe we should table the thorny question of obtaining a replacement aircraft from the DOD until next year. I suggest this because the donation of aircraft from USAF to CIA is always a contentious matter especially with the JCS. I believe we should strive to get the loaned aircraft back first without beclouding this issue with the acquisition of another U-2 aircraft from the DOD. I believe it does make good sense, however, to raise this question with the DOD sometime late next Spring when we have a better idea what our over-all commitments will be when matched against eight operational aircraft. [redacted]

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[redacted] we are in good shape on cameras with the acquisition of three improved B cameras in the past year, as well as the current order for four high-resolution CORONA type cameras from ITEK.

[redacted]
ALBERT D. WHEELON
Deputy Director
(Science and Technology)

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Signature Recommended:



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